

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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USDOC FOR MEPD CONGER

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BENC GB
SUBJECT: GRAND POUBARA

SUMMARY: TAMS HAS RECEIVED EDF PRELIMINARY REPORT AND WILL PREPARE PROPOSAL TO GOG. MINISTRY OF MINES (CHAMBRIER) WOULD WELCOME SIMILAR PROPOSAL FROM CTMI AND WILL FURNISH EDF PRELIMINARY REPORT IF CTMI ACCEPTS PARAMETERS SET FORTH BELOW. ACTION REQUESTED: MEPD TO SEEK REPLY FROM CTMI TO CHAMBRIER QUESTION AND TO URGE TAMS MEET GOG DEADLINE FOR ITS PROPOSAL. END SUMMARY.

1. IN WAKE SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH MBOUY-BOUTZIT AND OTHER GOG MINISTERS, TAMS RECEIVED COPY OF EDF PRELIMINARY REPORT ON GRAND POUBARA AUGUST 26 WITH COVERING LETTER SETTING FORTH PARAMETERS FOR PROPOSAL DESIRED BY GOG. LETTER AND STUDY HAVE BEEN HAND-CARRIED TO NEW YORK, WHERE CROPOSAL XOW BEING DEVELOPED AGAINST EARLY OCTOBER DEADLINE (SIX WEEKS AFTER DELIVERY OF EDF REPORT) SPECIFIED BY GOG.

2. IN VIEW OF TIOU CONSTRAINTS SET BY GOG, EMBASSY DECIDED AGAINST AWAITING MBOUY-BOUTZIT'S RETURN TO REAFFIRM CTMI INTEREST, AND AMBASSAD THUS DELIVERED CTMI LETTER TO CHAMBRIER AUGUST 31 PRIOR RECEIT STATE 215405. AMBASSADOR REHEARSED FOR CHAMBRIER CON-
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SERVATION WHICH HE AND CONGER HAD WITH MBOUY-BOUTZIT RE

IMPORTANCE OF HIGH QUALITY ENGINEERING STUDIES AND DESIRABILITY OF OBTAINING BIDS FROM BOTH INTERESTED US FIRMS (TAMS AND CTMI), AND CHAMBRIER IN TURN REITERATED GOG DESIRE HAVE US FIRM PREPARE ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY STUDY AND HELP FIND BOTH POTENTIAL POWER CONSUMERS AND SOURCES OF FINANCING. CHAMBRIER PROVIDED PARAMETERS (BELOW) FOR PROPOSAL WHICH TAMS HAS BEEN ASKED PREPARE, AND SAID GOG WOULD WELCOME SIMILAR PROPOSAL FROM CTMI. IF CTMI WILLING PREPARE PROPOSAL ALONG LINES DEFINED BY GOG, CHAMBRIER PROMISED MAKE AVAILABLE COPY OF EDF PRELIMINARY REPORT WHICH EMBASSY COULD THEN TRANSMIT VIA POUCH TO CTMI. AS WITH TAMS, CTMI WOULD HAVE SIX WEEKS FROM RECEIPT OF EDF DOCUMENT TO PREPARE ITS PROPOSAL.

3. PARAMETERS OF PROPOSAL DESIRED, AS QUOTED FROM GOG LETTER TO TAMS, ARE AS FOLLOWS: COMPANY REQUESTED TO "SUBMIT DETAILED PROPOSAL, WITH COSTS, FOR ECONOMIC STUDY OF GRAND POUBARA DAM PROJECT WITHIN SIX WEEKS FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF EDF REPORT, SAID PROPOSAL TO INCLUDE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS: (A) DETERMINE PROFITABILITY (FEASIBILITY) OF DAM AS CURRENTLY ENVISAGED TO SUPPLY FERRO-MANGANESE PLANT (I.E., 160 MEGAWATTS INSTALLED, 120 GUARANTEED); (B) IDENTIFY AND CONTACT INDUSTRIES WHICH ARE POTENTIAL CONSUMERS OF ELECTRIC POWER AND WHICH MIGHT BE PREPARED TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN GABON IF ASSURED ELECTRIC POWER AT MODERATE PRICE, BEARING IN MIND PROXIMITY OF TRANSGABON RAILROAD; (C) DETERMINE ON BASIS OF AVAILABLE TECHNICAL DATA AND RESULTS OF CONTACTS UNDERTAKEN UNDER PARAGRAPH (B) ABOVE ECONOMIC INTEREST OF ENLARGING GRAND POUBARA PROJECT (I.E., TO 250 MEGAWATTS INSTALLED CAPACITY); AND (D) STUDY AND PROPOSE ONE OR SEVERAL METHODS OF FINANCING PROJECT."

4. COMMENT CHAMBRIER HAS SAID ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT GOG PROPOSES ASK AMERICAN FIRM TO DO ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY STUDY AND THEN GIVE CONTRACT FOR FURTHER TECHNICAL STUDIES TO FRENCH FIRM, AND REQUEST TO BOTH TAMS AND CTMI TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL ONLY FOR FORMER GIVES FURTHER WEIGHT TO HIS REMARKS. NEVERTHELESS, DECISION TO DIVIDE CONTRACTS IN THIS UNSATISFACTORY FASHIOON MAY NOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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YET BE LOCKED IN CONCRETE, AND WE WILL CONTINUE EFFORTS TO KEEP AMERICAN FIRMS IN RUNNING FOR MORE IMPORTANT ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT WORK.

5. ESSENTIAL NEXT STEP TO KEEP OUR HAND IN IS FOR AMERICAN FIRMS TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS ALONG LINES REQUESTED BY GOG WITHIN TIME FRAME SPECIFIED. PROPOSALS MIGHT USEFULLY INCLUDE AT LEAST OUTLINE OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES

BEYOND ECONOMIC STUDIES THAT FIRMS ARE PREPARED TO OFFER, ALONG WITH ALL POSSIBLE ARGUMENTATION ON DESIRABILITY OF HAVING SAME (HOPEFULLY AMERICAN) COMPANY DO BOTH ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL WORK.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: IN KEEPING WITH ABOVE, WOULD APPRECIATE MEPD CALLING CTMI TO ASK WHETHER FIRM WILLING PREPARE PROPOSAL WITHIN PARAMETERS DEFINED BY GOG (I.E., FOR ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY STUDY ALONE), AND IF SO TO CONFIRM AGREEMENT THROUGH EMBASSY TO GOG. ON BASIS THEIR VERBAL AGREEMENT, WE SHOULD BE ABLE OBTAIN FOR CTMI CONFIRMING LETTER SIMILAR TO ONE ALREADY SENT TO TAMS AS WELL AS COPY OF EDF PRELIMINARY REPORT. MIGHT ALSO BE HELPFUL IF MEPD CALLED ROBERT HEINS AT TAMS TO REAFFIRM IMPORTANCE GOG ATTACHES TO GETTING PROPOSAL PROMPTLY AND TO URGE THEM MEET EARLY OCTOBER DEADLINE IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.

7. LOCAL TAMS MANAGER MIHAI ALIMENESTIANU WILL BE IN NEW YORK APPROXIMATELY SEPTEMBER 10 AND PLANS CALL CONGER AT THAT TIME. STEIGMAN

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